

Michigan NETS talk

Michigan Network of Employers For Traffic Safety

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Belt Use Rate On the Rise

The Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) congratulates you for your efforts to promote the Click it or Ticket message in your business and your community. Thanks to your efforts, the most recent statewide survey conducted by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) indicates **82.3%** of Michigan motorists are now buckling up.

Congratulations to everyone in the traffic safety community who answered the call and participated in efforts to get the *Click it or Ticket* message out this summer. This exercise has demonstrated how critical it is for the entire community to support our law enforcement officers' efforts to obtain compliance with the law. Messages were delivered in a number of very creative ways and in many non-traditional venues. Highly visible repetition of the Click it or Ticket messages in those places where our target audience is most likely to see them was a key to our success. Special thanks to our corporate partner, Melody Farms of Livonia, Michigan. Over 260,000 milk cartons with a special Click it or Ticket message embedded on the cartons side panels were distributed throughout the State of Michigan this past summer.

Our long-term goal is to reach 90% seat belt use, which has been

achieved in California and will soon be reached by the State of New York. In order to achieve this goal, we must convince the part-time belt users that full-time use of their seat belt is in their best interest.

Recent surveys commissioned by OHSP have suggested that in addition to the enforcement message, a unique approach may be needed to reach those who only buckle up on freeways, in bad weather and when they are passengers.

OHSP and the Michigan NETS program is ready to assist you to make seat belt use a priority in your organization. Let us know of actions you are taking that are successful—and also let us know if you need further support.

We look forward to celebrating again next year when we are certain our 2002 statewide survey will begin pushing past the 83% mark and moving closer toward our 90% goal!



Michigan Marks Second Anniversary of Repeat Offender Laws



In the two years since Michigan adopted repeat offender provisions to address

drunk driving and drivers with suspended and revoked licenses, more than 38,000 license plates have been confiscated and more than 7,100 vehicles impounded. October 1, 2001 marked the second anniversary since the repeat offender laws took effect. In that time, serious injury or fatal alcohol-related crashes in the state have fallen from 2,363 in 1999 to 2,100 in 2000. In the two years, nearly 24,000 drivers have had their licenses revoked or denied; another

95,800 have had license suspensions; 4,900 ignition interlocks have been installed in vehicles; as well as 38,347 license plates being confiscated, 7,100 vehicles immobilized and another 7,300 vehicles sold in lieu of immobilization.

If you haven't ordered your **FREE** Repeat Offender Employer Education kit, take this opportunity to order the kit today. Simply log onto the Michigan NETS homepage, www.michnets.org, click the icon, "The Laws Have Changed," and follow the online instructions. This kit is designed to help employers and employees understand the state's tough, repeat offender laws.

Information provided by Michigan Department of State



NEWS YOU CAN USE

Due to the tragic events that took place on September 11, 2001, the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety's annual Drive Safely Work Week campaign will be moved back several weeks and will occur in early October in 2002. The exact dates for the 2002 campaign have not been determined. Information will go out when available.

Work zone fatality statistics have been released for the 2000 and unfortunately are a new record high for the country. This new figure 1,093 is up 26 percent from the 868 killed in work zones in 1999. The latest figures are available on the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) website: www.atssa.com. Please note that the 2002 National Work Zone Safety Awareness Day is Tuesday, April 9th.

The Work Truck Show 2002, the National Truck Equipment Association's (NTEA) annual business-to-business trade show, will be held March 6-8, 2002, at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. Fleet managers, truck equipment upfitters, and other professionals involved in specifying, building and using work trucks in all industries can see the latest in chassis design and talk to representatives from 12 major truck chassis manufacturers. The show will feature hundreds of industry suppliers displaying full-size equipment chassis from Class 1 through Class 8.

The Wall Street Journal reported the IRS has declared an optional standard rate for business use of a car will increase nearly 6 percent from 34.5 to 36.5 cents per mile starting January 1, 2000. The IRS increases are primarily due to increase in gas prices over the past year.

Mark your calendar and save the date. The 7th annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit will take place April 30-May 1, 2002 at the Holiday Inn South, Lansing, Michigan. The 2002 Summit will be held in conjunction with the Secondary Road Patrol Conference for Sheriff departments. Registration materials will be posted at the following website in mid-January 2002, <http://www.ohsp.state.mi.us/summit/summit.htm>. Call Sandy Brown at (517) 333-5301 or e-mail browns1@michigan.gov for further details. If you have specific questions about exhibiting or corporate sponsorship opportunities at the conference please contact Dan Vartanian at (517) 333-5322 or e-mail vartanid@michigan.gov.

Solutions Needed to Combat Drowsy Driving, Urges NSF

A new National Sleep Foundation (NSF) survey reports that 50 percent of all American adults admitted to drowsy driving in the past year, and one in five actually fell asleep. NSF is now calling for a national consensus to implement solutions.

"Safety experts express concern that despite successful efforts to get most Americans to buckle up, major reductions in drunk driving, and significant safety advances to vehicles themselves, that we continue to have so many deaths and injuries," said NSF executive director Richard Gelula. "This missing part of the puzzle is too many drowsy drivers."

Drowsy driving is responsible for at least 100,000 vehicle crashes, 40,000 injuries, and 1,550 fatalities each year, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The latest *Sleep in America* poll shows that:

- Drowsy driving is more prevalent among males than females (59 percent vs. 47 percent), especially males aged 18-29
- Adults with children living at home reported driving drowsy more often (60 percent) than those without (48 percent)
- 80 percent agreed that information about drowsy driving should be included in driver's license testing and drowsy drivers should be penalized if caught
- About 25 percent said they drove drowsy to or from work at least a few days a month; 4 percent said they drove to work drowsy almost every day (shift workers are even more likely to drive drowsy at 36 percent)

"The highway safety community knows that this is an unrecognized crisis," Gelula explained. "We must focus attention on preventing drivers from getting behind the wheel when they are impaired by lack of sleep."

Drowsiness is the most difficult for police and crash investigators to detect and quantify, unlike factors such as speeding and alcohol use. NSF will work with police and others to change that.

"Talk to police officers, and they will tell you that often the only logical explanation for some crashes is that the driver fell sleep at the wheel. But it seldom becomes an official cause in the crash report," Gelula commented. "Absent hard crash data, nothing is being done nationally to address what we all know to be an issue."

**If your HEAD's
in the clouds
while driving,
your BODY could
soon follow.**

Pay attention. Don't drive drowsy.
Safe driving is a full-time job.



Winter Car Tips—Prepare for Winter's Worst

Between the snow and the cold, December 2000 was a month many Michigan motorists would rather forget. On, December 11, the blizzard began, dumping up to 18 inches of snow in some parts of the state, followed by more snow and a big chill that resulted in more than 100,000 calls for emergency road service over one four-week period.

Although this blast caught some car owners by surprise, the good news is that state residents can take immediate steps to prepare for the worst that Mother Nature can dish out. A safe vehicle is a necessary ingredient to surviving winter driving safely.

Here is AAA Michigan's 12-point Winter Car Care checklist:

- **Battery**—Check for loose battery cables and corroded terminals. Terminals can be cleaned with a wire brush dipped in baking soda and water.
- **Antifreeze**—Check the antifreeze strength in the radiator overflow reservoir with a hydrometer. Antifreeze should be clean, at proper level and provide protection to 36 degrees below zero.
- **Oil**—Check the oil level with the dipstick. Check the owner's manual



for the intervals between changes and for the recommended SAE viscosity.

- **Brake fluid**—Keep the fluid level within a quarter-inch from the top of the reservoir.
- **Power steering fluid**—Follow directions in the owner's manual. If fluid is needed, add slowly to avoid overfilling.
- **Automatic transmission fluid**—The car should be on level ground in "park" position with the emergency

brake set and engine running. Then check the fluid level with the dipstick.

- **Belts and hoses**—Inspect the serpentine belt(s) for excessive cracks, fraying and glazing. Check hoses for cracks, bulges, leaks and loose clamps. Replace as needed.
- **Air filter**—Hold filter up to a light. If you can't see light through it, replace it.
- **Washer fluid**—Keep reservoir filled with solvent.
- **Wipers**—Replace wipers if they are split, leave streaks or skip.
- **Lights/signals**—Make sure they work. Replace bulbs as necessary.
- **Tires**—Inspect tread wear and maintain proper air pressure indicated in the owner's manual. Check air pressure with a gauge when tires are cold.

Winter Driving Tips:

Some people find out the hard way that slick driving conditions can affect a vehicle's handling and braking ability. The leading cause of traffic crashes on ice-slicked, snow-clogged roads is following the car in front too closely. The driver in front stops; you can't.

AAA Michigan recommends increasing your following distance on slippery roads from the "good-road" gap of 3 seconds to the "slippery-road" gap of 6 seconds.

A good way to measure the six-second time gap is to pick out a distinct road marking or sign, and then begin counting when the car ahead passes that spot—"one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two..."

Use extra caution on shaded areas and bridges, overpasses and intersections—areas where ice is likely to form first or be more slippery because the shiny ice surface has either been polished by previous traffic, a thin layer of water covers melting ice below or a temperature difference exists.

- Always wear your seat belt and wear it properly.
- Improve visibility by clearing all snow and ice from the entire car—hood, roof, trunk, turn signals, lights, windows, mirrors,

even fender wells. Also, driving with headlights on low beam provides better road illumination in snow and fog than using high-beams.

- Posted speed limits are set for ideal road and weather conditions.
- Avoid sudden starts, stops, turns. Accelerate carefully so wheels don't spin.
- Don't brake hard.
- In a skid, ease off the accelerator and don't lock up the brakes. Carefully steer in the direction you want the car to go and straighten the wheel as soon as the car begins to go in the desired direction.
- Anticipate potential danger such as ice on bridges, snow-covered lane markings, stalled cars and poor visibility. Adjust speed, increase distance between other cars or change lanes to avoid trouble. Watch for other drivers who may be unprepared for changing road conditions.
- Motorists should carry shovel, boots and other winter items in their trunks and make sure vehicles have at least a half tank of gas.



Survey Finds Contact with Family Main Reason for Cell Phone Use

Almost half of cell phone users report they have swerved into another lane and sped up while driving alone and talking on their phones, according to a new survey by Progressive Insurance. Eleven percent report knowing someone who was involved in a crash that resulted from talking on a cell phone.

Twenty-three percent who were talking on a cell phone while driving admit to having tailgated another vehicle, 21 percent having cut someone off, and 18 percent nearly hitting another vehicle.

The survey, conducted by www.progressive.com, found that 90 percent of people who use their cell phone while driving alone haven't used their phone for a work-related call in the past six months. Also, 40 percent work outside the home between 41–50 hours a week and report they wouldn't use a cell phone while driving if they had more time to take care of personal business.

Sixty percent say they had not used their phones while driving alone for an emergency in the last six months, while 35 percent made over 30 personal calls in the last six months to friends and

families while driving.

The typical cell phone user drives alone. More than half (61 percent) are men; 71 percent are between the ages of 18 and 34; and they most often drive mid-size cars, followed by compact cars and sport-utility vehicles.

The survey also found:

- 32 percent pay less attention to their driving when receiving bad news on a call
- 43 percent say they speed up to get away from other drivers who are talking on their cell phone and driving erratically
- 26 percent say that cell phone use while driving should be made illegal
- 23 percent say law enforcement should be able to pull people over solely for using their cell phone while driving



New video for parents & guardians on the dangers of underage drinking

The video “Underage Drinking and Parental Responsibility, The Zero Tolerance Law Includes You” which was developed by the Office of Highway Safety Planning is now available. This video was produced to inform parents/guardians about where minors obtain alcohol, and encourage parents/guardians to get involved. Discussion takes place in the video about minors obtaining alcohol, with or without parental acknowledgement from their



own homes. Parents and guardians are informed as to the consequences they face for allowing minors to drink in their home, and also the consequences that minors who are caught drinking will face. Serious conversation takes place regarding the dangers of teenage drinking. The video may be ordered, free of charge, by faxing your request to the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 882-7778 or at www.michiganresourcecenter.org.

